

25 YEAR RE-REVIEW

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RESEARCH ON FIUME

FIUME, Italian port on the Gulf of Quarnero, Adriatic Sea, in the Province of Fiume, 40 mi. S.E. of Trieste. Population (1936) 53,401 (town), 53,896 (commune). After being taken by Charlemagne, it long remained under the Franks and was then held by the Bishop of Pola in feudal tenure from the patriarch of Aquileia. The counts of Duino held it 1139-c. 1400. The counts of Wallace held it next, and, in 1471, Emperor Frederick III incorporated it in Austria; it was made a free port, in 1723, and was united to Croatia, in 1776, and declared a corpus separatum of the Hungarian crown, in 1779.

The French held it 1809 - 1813, when the English took it and restored it to Austria, in 1814. It was ceded to Hungary, in 1822; was Croatia's, in 1849 - 1870; and, thereafter, was under Hungary until it sprang into world-wide notoriety in connection with the matters discussed below.

The town is built on a ridge of the Karst, while the newer parts are crowded into the amphitheatre between ridge and shore. The old town has a third century Roman triumphal arch. The Cathedral of the Assumption was founded in 1377. The pilgrimage church hung with offerings from shipwrecked sailors is approached by a stairway of four hundred steps. The Maria Theresa Road was opened in 1809, to connect Fiume with Hungary via Karolyvaros or Karlstadt (Croatia). There are two railways, one connecting with Trieste and Ljubljana, and the other running through Croatia to Zagreb. The soil around Fiume is stony, but the climate favors the vine; the gulf yields abundant fish, especially tuna.

When Fiume was included in Hungary, it was a port of emigration, and had a torpedo factory.

The population in 1910 was 22,488 Italians and 13,351 Slavs, as well as Hungarians, Germans, and others; the suburb, Susak or Sushak, had an estimated population of 1,500 Italians and 11,000 Slavs, and others. Italian is spoken in Fiume but not in the neighboring villages.

The main harbor is formed within a long breakwater. The entrance is deep and there are twenty-seven to thirty feet of water at the quays. A floating dock of 1,800 tons lifting capacity is part of the equipment.

Wood, rice, sugar, petrol are exported, and fuels and colonial articles, including rice, are imported.

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#### THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Fiume became a burning question after World War I. It even threatened to become the cause of further war between Italy and Yugoslavia, although a secret treaty of London of 26 April 1915, which contained Italy's terms for entering into the war, assigned Fiume to Croatia.

The Italian Claims. The first Italian claim to Fiume was made by Bissolati (q. v.) immediately after his resignation from the cabinet, at the end of 1918.

Baron Sonnino's inaction in this matter was due to the fact that, in 1915, he had neither anticipated, nor desired, the total break-up of the dual monarchy. But, in 1919, the official Italians demanded Fiume on the principle of "self-determination," because its Italian inhabitants were in the majority, and is a larger majority still if Fiume proper were separated from its Yugoslav suburb of Susak on the opposite side of the rivulet, which had given to Fiume its name, and which the Slavs called simply Recina, and the Italians, Eneo.

Meanwhile, on 23 October, Croat troops had seized Fiume, and in November there was a dual occupation, against which the Yugoslav National Council protested, by Italian and Serbian troops, while Italian naval forces entered the harbor. The Serbian troops were, however, withdrawn and replaced by an inter-Allied force, pending the decision of the Fiume question by the Peace Conference.

The Italians' position was similar to that known in English law as "pleading inconsistent defenses." They claimed North Dalmatia, overwhelmingly Slav by race, in virtue of the Treaty of London, which President Wilson repudiated, and Fiume in virtue of the Wilson principle of "self-determination."

The D'Annunzio Adventure. They ultimately obtained Fiume, thanks to the raid made by Gabriele D'Annunzio (q. v.) who mustered a body of men at Ronchi near Trieste, and on 12 September 1919, occupied the contested town. There, despite official notes, he remained as "commandant." He drew up a constitution for the "Carnaro," as he called his miniature state. He descended with his "legionaries" upon Zara and meditated an extension of his territories still farther southward. While successive Italian governments gave him no official support, he received considerable sympathy from the

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nationalist elements in Italy. But when Count Sforza concluded the Treaty of Rapallo with the Yugoslavs (11 November 1920) he resolved, with the full support of Giolitti, then prime minister, to turn the poet out of Fiume. The orders he gave to the Italian fleet were: "Bomb D'Annunzio's palace and only it; it will be enough; D'Annunzio will be so surprised that he will escape at once."

So it had happened; D'Annunzio retired to Gardone, on the Lake of Garda; and his rival Dr. Zanella went into office. Zanella was a good Italian, and just because he was a good Italian he wanted Fiume to have friendly relations with the Yugoslavs, but a coup d'etat staged by fascists and old followers of D'Annunzio took place in 1922; Zanella resigned and came to Rome.

A local engineer succeeded him and proclaimed annexation to Italy, but the government, in Rome, ignored the annexation and even succeeded in keeping the fascists away from Fiume.

Negotiations between Italy and Yugoslavia. When Mussolini came to power, he remained at first under the influence of the permanent under-secretary of the Italian foreign office, Contarini, who persuaded him to make a serious attempt to come to terms with the Yugoslavs. The river had, in the course of generations, changed its course, forming a "delta," as it was called, and thus rendering doubtful the boundary of Fiume towards Susak.

Both parties claimed the "delta." The smaller harbor, too, called in Hungarian times "Port Baross" but rechristened "Porto Nazario Sauro" by the Italians, had never belonged to the corpus separatum of Fiume, and Sforza during the negotiations at Rapallo had admitted that it was so, but he refused to cede it immediately to Yugoslavia since he believed that the salvation of Fiume lay in the creation of an Italo-Fiuman-Yugoslav consortium with Belgrade, and to which, in his opinion, Yugoslavia should have given Port Baross as its own contribution.

But all that disappeared with fascism in power: an arrangement was concluded between Italy and Yugoslavia which created normal conditions, but without the fruitful Italo-Yugoslav collaboration that had been Sforza's aim.

The idea of the consortium, which alone might have saved Fiume from death, was dropped; Fiume was annexed to Italy and Port Baross ceded to Yugoslavia. The opening in 1925 of the

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last link in the Lika Railway connecting the Port of Spalato, in Dalmatia, with the Yugoslav hinterland was an additional blow to the life of Fiume.

An Italian-Hungarian convention providing a free zone for Hungary in Fiume was signed in Rome, in 1927, but no serious advantages came to Fiume out of it.

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